

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method for commercial processing of green Cicer beans, the method comprising:

taking a field tenderometer reading of a sample Cicer bean;

harvesting green Cicer beans when the sample tenderometer reading is between 91 and 149;

separating said green Cicer beans from harvested green Cicer bean product;

cleaning said green Cicer beans;

preserving said green Cicer beans;

grading said green Cicer beans according to predetermined criteria; and

packaging said green Cicer beans.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein preserving said green Cicer beans comprises blanching said green Cicer beans at a predetermined temperature and for a predetermined dwell time.

3. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 2, wherein preserving said green Cicer beans further comprises testing for enzyme activity after blanching and adjusting said predetermined temperature during blanching based on enzyme activity.

4. (Original) The method of Claim 2, wherein blanching said green Cicer beans comprises testing for enzyme activity after blanching and adjusting said predetermined dwell time during blanching according to enzyme activity.

5. (Original) The method of Claim 2, wherein said predetermined dwell time is between 1 and 5 minutes and said predetermined temperature is between 90°F and 210°F.

6. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 2, wherein the predetermined temperature is between 190°F and 195°F and the predetermined dwell time is about 3 minutes.

7. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein preserving said green Cicer beans comprises freezing said green Cicer beans.

8. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein preserving said green Cicer beans comprises dehydrating said green Cicer beans.

9-10. (Canceled)

11. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein separating green Cicer beans from harvested green Cicer bean product comprises:

collecting data regarding the relative sizes of said green Cicer beans; and

filtering harvested green Cicer bean product to separate green Cicer beans of at least a predetermined size from the harvested green Cicer bean product.

12. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein cleaning said green Cicer beans comprises:

collecting said green Cicer beans in a body of water; and

removing any material floating on said body of water.

13. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 12, further comprising repeating the steps of collecting said green Cicer beans in a body of water and removing any material floating on said body of water.

14. (Currently amended) A method for the commercial processing of green Cicer beans comprising:

taking a field tenderometer reading of a sample Cicer bean;

harvesting green Cicer beans when the sample tenderometer reading is between 91 and 149;

delivering harvested green Cicer bean product;

filtering said harvested green Cicer bean product through a vibrating screen to remove depodded green Cicer beans from said harvested green Cicer bean product;

cleaning said depodded green Cicer beans;

preserving said depodded green Cicer beans; and

grading said depodded green Cicer beans according to predetermined criteria.

15. (Original) The method of Claim 14, further comprising collecting size data for depodded green Cicer beans.

16. (Original) The method of Claim 15, wherein filtering said harvested green Cicer bean product comprises adjusting said vibrating screen according to the collected size data.

17. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein cleaning said depodded green Cicer beans comprises:

depositing said depodded green Cicer beans in a body of water; and
removing any material floating on the body of water, wherein said floating material may include podded green Cicer beans.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 17, further comprising depositing said depodded Cicer beans in a body of water a second time, and again removing any material floating on the body of water.

20. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein preserving said depodded green Cicer beans comprises dehydrating said depodded green Cicer beans.

21. (Original) The method of Claim 20, wherein said depodded green Cicer beans are dehydrated with initial temperatures ranging between 120°F and 190°F and final temperatures ranging between 120°F and 190°F with a dwell time between 2 and 10 hours.

22. (Original) The method of Claim 20, wherein said depodded green Cicer beans are dehydrated to a final moisture content between 1% and 10%.

23. (Original) The method of Claim 20, wherein said depodded green Cicer beans are dehydrated to approximately 12% of an initial product green weight.

24. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein preserving said depodded green Cicer beans comprises freezing said depodded green Cicer beans.

25. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein preserving said depodded green Cicer beans comprises blanching said depodded green Cicer beans.

26-40. (Canceled)

41. (Currently amended) A method for the commercial processing of green Cicer beans comprising:

taking a field tenderometer reading of a sample Cicer bean;

harvesting green Cicer beans when the sample tenderometer reading is between 91 and 149; and

filtering harvested green Cicer bean product through an adjustable screen, wherein said adjustable screen has a plurality of spaced louvers, and wherein said plurality of louvers are selectively adjusted based on the relative sizes of the green Cicer beans to be processed.

42. (Original) The method of Claim 41, further comprising vibrating said adjustable screen at a predetermined vibration rate.

43. (Original) The method of Claim 41, further comprising:
collecting data regarding the relative sizes of the green Cicer beans to be processed prior to filtering the harvested green Cicer bean product through the adjustable screen; and
selectively adjusting said adjustable screen based on said data.

44. (Original) The method of Claim 41, further comprising:
collecting data regarding the relative sizes of the green Cicer beans to be processed during filtering of the harvested green Cicer bean product through the adjustable screen; and
selectively adjusting said adjustable screen based on said data.